



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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September 11, 2003

TO: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – AFFIRMATIVE
ACTION DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

We have completed a review of Affirmative Action Development Center (Affirmative Action). Affirmative Action is a licensed Group Home with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation). Affirmative Action is a six-bed facility, located in the Fourth Supervisorial District that provides care for boys ages 14-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Affirmative Action was providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to verify that Affirmative Action is providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues. The review included an evaluation of Affirmative Action's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with two children placed with Affirmative Action at the time of the review. The interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by Affirmative Action, and to ensure its adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, Affirmative Action is providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. However, we noted that, although the children were receiving individual and group therapy sessions from the Group Home social worker, emotional and developmental counseling and psychological testing was not being provided by a psychologist. In addition, Affirmative Action needs to make a few minor repairs within the facility; provide residents with a computer; improve the children's Needs and Services Plans by making them time specific and ensure that every child receives an initial diagnostic assessment. Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management on August 26, 2003. The Agency's management has agreed to provide DCFS with a written corrective action plan within fifteen business days of this report. We thank Affirmative Action's management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Patrick McMahon at (213) 974-0729.

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
Stan Allotey, Executive Director, Affirmative Action Development Center

**Affirmative Action Development Center
240 E. Allington Street
Long Beach, CA 90805
Phone: (562) 428-8140
License No.: 191601445
Rate Classification Level: 8**

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Affirmative Action is a large home located on a residential street. The facility is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends in with the other homes on the block. No observable safety hazards were observed.

The interior of the home is generally neat and clean and the décor gives a sense of a home-like atmosphere. The common rooms are nicely decorated and maintained. Resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks. However, there are a few areas in need of improvement.

In both resident bathrooms, areas around the sinks have mildew/mold and are in need of caulking. The window screen in the front bathroom is not attached to the window frame. In the front bedroom, the wall has a hole near the closet and inside the closet door frame is graffiti writing.

There is age-appropriate play equipment in the home including table games, a TV, VCR, weights and basketball equipment. There are a variety of programs, books, and resource material, but no working computer accessible to the residents.

There is a sufficient supply of frozen foods, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food is accessible, appropriately dated, and properly stored.

Recommendations

Affirmative Action management:

1. Facility and Environment improvements needed:

- a. **Remove all mold/mildew from the sink areas in both bathrooms.**

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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES*

- b. **Attach the window screen to the window frame in the front bathroom.**
- c. **Repair the hole in the wall in the front bedroom.**
- d. **Remove graffiti writing from the closet door frame in the front bedroom.**
- e. **Provide a computer for the residents' use.**

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents meet Affirmative Action's population criteria as outlined in their program statement. One resident received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into Affirmative Action program but the other resident did not.

Both Needs and Service Plans (NSPs) are current, realistic, and measurable. However, they are not time specific. In addition, the children's placements workers are not given the opportunity to participate in the development and updating of the NSPs.

The Quarterly Reports are current and timely but not complete because medical updated information is not included.

The residents are not being provided with emotional and developmental counseling and psychological testing as required by the program statement, as Affirmative Action has been without a psychologist for the past three months. However, both residents are receiving individual and group therapy sessions from Affirmative Action's social worker.

Recommendations

Affirmative Action management:

2. Program Services needed:

- a. **Provide each resident with an initial diagnostic assessment.**
- b. **Develop Needs and Service Plans that are time specific.**

- c. Offer each resident's placement worker the opportunity to participate the in development and updating of the Needs and Services Plan.
- d. Provide comprehensive Quarterly Reports.
- e. Ensure all residents are receiving emotional and developmental counseling and psychological testing from a qualified psychologist.

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents are enrolled in local schools and their records contain semester report cards and/or progress reports. The residents report that they are provided with a sufficient amount of educational stimulation away from school on a daily basis and that Affirmative Action is supportive of their academic progress.

Development of daily living skills is a part of Affirmative Action's program. The residents are involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals, hygiene care is discussed as needed, and employment preparation is encouraged.

Age-appropriate residents are involved or offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Affirmative Action provides its residents with sufficient opportunity to participate in both on-ground and off-ground recreational activities. The residents express satisfaction with the variety and the quantity of activities provided by Affirmative Action and state that the recreation schedules are followed and implemented.

Affirmative Action utilizes local community organizations for recreation and program resources. The residents report that they participate in the planning of some of the activities; they have ample free time; are able to participate in self-selected activities; and that Affirmative Action provides transportation to the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: There were six residents placed in Affirmative Action at the time of the review. A review of case files was not conducted as there were no residents were on psychotropic medications.

Comments:

According to Affirmative Action's director, there are no residents on psychotropic medications at the time of this review.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents express satisfaction with the facility and Affirmative Action's staff stating that the atmosphere is generally respectful. Residents participate in an initial orientation and Affirmative Action's policies and procedures are posted in the facility. The residents report that they feel safe in the home and that there is no interference with daily living functions. Both residents report satisfaction with the taste of the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They also report that the staff supervises them appropriately and express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with the staff. Both residents feel there is at least one staff member they can trust and easily talk to.

Both residents report that they have assigned reasonable chores to complete on a daily basis; are able to have visitors; make and receive personal telephone calls; and contact their social workers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Both are able to attend weekly religious services of their choice and feel that Affirmative Action respects their cultural lifestyles by allowing residents to celebrate different holidays.

The residents report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced by all of the staff and that they have fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Both residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Affirmative Action provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. Affirmative Action supplies its residents with the required monthly clothing allowance in the amount of fifty dollars, and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to the residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity. Affirmative Action provides its residents with a fair minimum weekly allowance.

Affirmative Action provides residents with adequate personal care items and sufficient, secure space to store their personal items.

Both residents have life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.